Service Schedule

February

Friday, February 5
7:00 PM  Zoom Family Erev Shabbat Service

Friday, February 12
7:00 PM  Streaming Erev Shabbat Service

Friday, February 19
6:00 PM  Streaming Tot Shabbat
7:00 PM  Erev Streaming Shabbat

Thursday, February 25
6:00 PM  Zoom Erev Purim Trivia Night Experience

Friday, February 26
6:30 PM  Zoom Live Kabbalat Shabbat Service

Surprise!

Purim-in-a-Box coming your way

Instead of our traditional Mishloach Manot drive, our Confirmation class will be boxing up Purim for you, complete with grogger, mask, hamantaschen and more!! Stay tuned for delivery details soon!

If you want to join our delivery team, let us know at admin@templesanjose.org.

JOIN US ON ZOOM

Purim Shpiel

We invite you to join us for our traditional Purim Shpiel on Sunday, February 28 at 10:00 AM

We’ve got a lot planned and can’t wait to share it with you.

More information to come soon!

TRIVIA

Erev Purim Trivia Night Experience

Think you know EVERYTHING about Purim?

We bet you don’t. Come test your trivia skills against your fellow congregants for trivia night! Hope to see you on February 25 at 6:00 PM

for this great event!

This experience is for adults. More information to come soon!

If any Temple member would like a physical copy of the membership directory, please contact us at admin@templesanjose.org or 408-292-0939, and we will be happy to mail one to you.

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From the President

**Temple Emanu-El is more than the building**

I’m sitting here at home watching football, reflecting on the disturbing past week. I’ve become adept at dealing with a kindergartner and a 3rd grader doing distance learning from my home office. I ran an unusually spirited Temple Board meeting on Tuesday night, January 5th. However, all normalcy left on Wednesday morning as a group of angry and misguided people overtook the Capitol building in Washington D.C. The next few days were spent cycling through news channels and social media anger. As an American, I was appalled. As a Jew, I was sickened to see so many of the “patriots” wearing anti-Semitic symbols. It left me deflated.

So, why am I telling you this? I’m just the Temple President. My political leanings are completely irrelevant and have no bearing on my role at Temple Emanu-El. However, I ask you to indulge me for just a moment.

This morning, I had the privilege of participating in the Bat Mitzvah of our own Sarah Applebaum. It gave me the chance to reflect on how important the temple community has been for me during the last 10 months. Being involved with the board and then becoming President certainly helps keep my time occupied during what seems to be an interminable “shelter in place”. It’s nice to have something to fill up a few hours. Temple business is a bit like work; I do it because it needs to be done. Tuesday’s Chat with the Rabbi has become something I try to attend as often as possible. It’s a small group, but we have some lively discussions and laugh a lot. Live Onegs and live Zoom services have a great energy. I understand that some of our services will be recordings available on YouTube, but I look forward to the day when we will all be able to share in services together. Any event that is a little bit social always leaves me feeling better than when I started. It’s good therapy.

Of course, I couldn’t leave well enough alone and feel good about what’s going on at the Temple with ZIGZAG events and social groups. I shifted into a slightly darker place. How much longer can we go without actually being open? How much longer can we go without being able to shake hands or hug a friend? When can we actually spend time in our beautiful sanctuary? I could feel the spiral of despair beginning. One of my fears of being Temple President was that I didn’t want the temple to fail on my watch. Well, we’re still up to our necks in this pandemic; what if people just lose interest in the temple and stop supporting it financially and otherwise? So, I’m not always the most optimistic person in the room.

Before I went back to bed and pulled the covers over my head, I thought to myself….”That’s just not going to happen.” Look at what we’ve accomplished in the last few years as a congregation. We raised almost $2.6 million to do the 2020 renovations. Almost no one thought we could do this. We had a few critics who felt that doing a capital project was going to fail. But Andrew Weinberg and Larry Fox forged ahead and we raised the money. Our plans have been submitted to the City of San Jose and we hope to break ground before summer.

The response to High Holy Days was amazing. Our Clergy team and staff put on a spectacular set of services. Our production value was high and the music and content was second to none. We had a huge audience of members and non-members from around the country. It was inspiring. Let’s not forget how much we all loved the gift bags.

Even during a pandemic/shutdown, our congregation stepped up and participated in our Annual Campaign like never before. Right before High Holy Days, I told the board that we were going to set a BHAG (Big Hairy Audacious Goal) for the Annual Campaign. In my pre-Rosh Hashana video I announced we were trying to raise $100,000. That’s $25,000 more than we have ever tried to raise during the campaign. Did, I think we would make it? Remember, I’m not an optimist. I figured, we’d shoot for $100K and be happy if we got to $75K. Once again, our community stepped up and we raised just under $110,000. This isn’t just mad money. We operate the synagogue with this money. We may even be able to reinstate pay raises that were suspended this year.

My natural pessimism has waned. We have so much to look forward to in 2021. We have a beautiful new Sanctuary waiting for us, hope to have a completely remodeled exterior. We’ll even have a new Cantor.

A synagogue is a building. A congregation is a group of people getting together for worship. Temple Emanu-El is both of those things. We are also a community of people who care about the institution and each other. It sounds a whole lot like a family. Even in the strangest of times, we cling to our family for support and love. It makes me feel good to be part of the Temple Emanu-El family.

Let’s have a happy and healthy 2021. Let’s connect whenever possible. That’s what families do.

Steve Krandel, President
Cantor Notes

Happy Purim, everyone! Enjoy one of my favorite bored, non-screen time things: KILLER SUDOKU!

In case you don’t know, here are the rules:

1. As with Sudoku, the objective of Killer Sudoku is to fill the grid with the numbers 1 to 9, such that each row, column and nonet (3x3 group of cells) contains each number only once.

2. In addition to this, a Killer Sudoku grid is divided into cages, shown with dashed lines. The sum of the numbers in a cage must equal the small number in its top-left corner.

3. The same number cannot appear in a cage more than once.

GOOD LUCK and have a HAPPY PURIM!

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Parents Circle - Families Forum program coming to Temple Emanu-El

You may know that the COVID relief bill the President signed in December was a “package” deal, with a load of other items included in it. One of those items was the Nita M. Lowey Middle East Partnership for Peace Act. This new law represents a huge investment in Israeli-Palestinian peacebuilding. It provides $250 million over five years to expand peace and reconciliation programs between Israelis and Palestinians and will help lay a foundation for a genuine peace. One of the programs which will hopefully be funded by this Partnership for Peace Act is the Parents Circle - Families Forum (PCFF).

The Parents Circle is a joint Israeli-Palestinian organization made up of more than 600 bereaved families. Their common bond is that they have lost...
Sisterhood continues to engage our members and Temple congregants by planning virtual events. We were so happy to celebrate Hanukkah together with a virtual White Elephant gift card party. We had some long-term members (Doris Davis, Bobi Levine, Harriet Reisner, Sybil Sommers and Lois Zell) and new members (Ellen Rudy & Anna Guiltieri) join us. Thank you to Judy for using her classroom pocket chart to organize our event. It helped with the stealing!! Yes, even friends steal during a White Elephant gift exchange!

Thank you to our amazing Membership V.P., Joy Powell, who has helped Sisterhood gain 13 new members. We appreciate the support of all our renewal memberships. Thank to our Life Members too! Sisterhood has 105 members to date.

If you would like to donate $36 to help us continue our financial support for Religious School programs and Temple programs, please send in your renewal of $36 with your check made payable to Temple Emanu-El Sisterhood and mail to Joy Powell.

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Cut or Tear, Complete Donation Amount and Send with Payment

Make checks payable to:
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Please contact Joy Powell at 408-274-2364 and learn more about TEE Sisterhood and/or email Joy at joyoustou@gmail.com

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Religious School

Here are clues to the following riddle:

**Significance**: Remembers the defeat of a plot to exterminate the Jews

**Observances**: Public reading of a book of while “blotting out” the villain’s name

**Length**: 1 day

**Customs**: Costume parties; drinking; eating fruit-filled triangular cookies

What am I? Hopefully you answered the Jewish holiday of Purim. If so, you won a lifetime supply of Hamentaschen from Costco. What significance does this holiday hold on the Jewish calendar? Purim is one of the most joyous and fun holidays as it commemorates a time when the Jewish people living in Persia were saved from extermination. But why all the revelry and hoopla? Because we are commanded to “eat, drink, and be merry”. We are commanded to boo and hiss and attempt to blot out the name of Haman at his very mention during the public reading of the Scroll of Esther. And according to the Talmud, we are required to drink until we cannot tell the difference between “cursed be Haman” and “blessed be Mordecai” (though opinions differ as to exactly how drunk that is). When else can you come to Temple drunk and be loud and obnoxious and dress up in costume? I love this holiday because of its irreverent nature. The High Holidays are solemn and reflective, Passover has its dietary restrictions, and Sukkot makes us eat and sleep outside for a week. But on Adar 14 we party in the streets like its Mardi Gras.

For all the joy on this holiday, Jewish custom tells us that we cannot fully enjoy the day without remembering those less fortunate that ourselves. Therefore, we are commanded to send out gifts of food or drink, and to make gifts to charity. The sending of gifts of food and drink is referred to as *Mishloach Manot* (lit. sending out portions). It is always the balance that we Jews keep in order to make the world a better place.

Finally, it is also customary to hold carnival-like celebrations on Purim, to perform plays and parodies, and to hold beauty contests. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, we will not be holding our annual Purim festivities (Carnival and Adult Purim celebrations). We will make the time as festive as possible and pray that Purim 2022 will be in person and “Party like it’s 1999”!!

Bottom line is Purim is coming at the end of this month and you should be ready to “eat, drink, and be merry”, dress up as your favorite Purim character, and be grateful for your health.

Chag Purim Samech!!

Phil Hankin, MAJE, Director of Education
D’var Torah - The Reluctant Leader

This week’s Parashat is Sh’mot. It begins by noting that Joseph and all his generation had died, and a new king of Egypt was crowned, one who knew not of Joseph and how Joseph was instrumental to the old Pharaoh. The new king was growing very wary of the Israelites since they were fruitful and multiplied. He was afraid their increasing numbers could rise up against him. He countered that perceived threat by making their labors even harder than normal. He also instructed the midwives to kill male Israelite babies. When the midwives refused, the king told them to throw the boys into the Nile. There was a Levi woman who bore a son and hid from the Egyptians. When the boy was three months the Levi woman put her son in a basket in the Nile. Pharaoh’s daughter discovered the infant, whom she named Moses, and raised him as her own.

Moses grew up witnessing the labors of his own people. When he was grown, he witnessed an Egyptian overseer beat an Israelite laborer and killed the overseer. Fearing getting discovered, he fled to Midian. There he defended a priest’s daughters from a group of shepherds as the daughters were trying to water their flock. The priest invited Moses to dinner and Moses eventually marries the priest’s daughter, Zipporah.

Meanwhile, the Israelites continued to strain under the yoke of the Egyptians and cried out from their bondage. God took notice and looked down upon them. Back in Midian, as Moses was tending to his flock, he noticed a bush that burned but was not consumed. God called to Moses from the bush and introduced himself. He instructs Moses to free the Israelites and Moses immediately asks what happens if the Israelites think he is a little crazy and will not listen to him. God teaches Moses several neat parlor tricks so the Israelites will think he is the real deal. Moses pleads further to choose someone else since he is slow of speech and tongue. God tells Moses to take his brother, Aaron, as a spokesperson.

Moses and his entire family head to Egypt. Zipporah performs the first circumcision along the way. Once in Egypt, Moses and Aaron plead with Pharaoh to free the Israelites. Pharaoh declines and makes life even harder for the Israelites. Moses goes back to God wondering why he was sent when his efforts only made life harder for the Israelites. The passage ends as God tells Moses that he will make life even harder for Pharaoh.

There are many themes in this passage, but I think the most fundamental theme is Moses as a reluctant leader. Leaders are most effective when they are called to lead rather than when they aspire to lead. God called to Moses from the burning bush and Moses pleaded with him to send someone else. Even though he was raised in the royal household, he was humble and felt most comfortable amongst his people, but he had no aspirations be a leader of those people.

We also want our leaders to have conviction. Moses kills an Egyptian overseer when he witnesses the overseer brutally beating one of Moses’ kinfolk. Moses risked death to save one of his own people. Leaders need to have courage and it takes a lot of courage to stand up to God saying that God choose the wrong person for the job. Good leaders also know their weaknesses and are not afraid to admit those weaknesses. Moses told God that he was slow of speech and tongue and then was not put off when God told Moses to have his brother make up for Moses’ deficiencies. Leaders can also face opposition but still move forward. Moses was not only rebuked by Pharaoh, but also by his own people on numerous occasions and kept to his objective and eventually succeeded.

As unlikely a leader as Moses seems, his conviction, courage, self-awareness and perseverance make him a very relatable character and able to lead in the face of numerous obstacles.

David Heiman

David has been Board of Trustees for 7 years and is currently the Treasurer.
Purim is the Festival of Lots, a celebration of the events recounted in the Scroll of Esther. Through the many colorful interpretations of the tale, we are all familiar with beautiful Queen Esther, her cousin the noble Mordechai, and villainous Haman, the king’s vizier. Their story unfolds in ancient Persia, and tells how our heroes outwitted Haman and foiled his plans to kill all the Jews. In honor of this history, we fill our iconic cookies with the traditional poppy seed paste, the original variety.

One year ago, our Purim spiel was canceled due to growing concern about the spread of a mysterious new disease. Monday, March 9, 2020 we were supposed to gather together in costumes, drink our wine, and recite the Megillah. But instead we dressed in our sweats, had pizza delivered, and counted our rolls of toilet paper. Purim was the first of our festivals interrupted by the Coronavirus, back before we even knew what was happening. For this, we create tomato hamentaschen, something disturbing, unwanted, barely edible, hopefully never to be repeated.

In addition to reciting the Megillah, the mitzvot of Purim include exchanging gifts of food and drink — mishloach manot, donating to charity (above and beyond traditional tzedakah), and eating the celebratory meal. Some may also observe the Fast of Esther the day prior, personalizing Esther’s efforts to build her resolve before approaching the king. These ritual activities ground and guide us, providing a framework for how we should participate in our community. The traditions each focus on an expanding awareness, from the personal fast, to the family meal, to the gifts for friends, to the charity for the stranger. This is the real spiritual heart of Purim, and for this, we fill our hamentaschen with apricot jam, making for the ultimate in delicious, sweet treats.

Of course, what is a modern Purim celebration without the carnival? A highlight of any Jewish school year are the crazy games, costumes, crafts, snacks, and activities of the Purim party. This tradition probably stems from medieval Italian Jews borrowing aspects of that other famous carnival that happens around the same time of year (Mardi Gras), but over time we have now made this something wholly our own. There’s even a biblical precedent for the masquerade, sort of, if you count Esther’s hiding from the King that she was Jewish.

In any case, this carnival makes Purim many children’s favorite Jewish holiday, and for them, we have a chocolate-filled hamentaschen, the variety that classrooms always seem to run out of first.

And as for Purim in the time of Coronavirus? As of this writing, the details have not yet been announced. But plans undoubtedly will involve sitting in front of our laptop screens, each of us at our individual homes. Last year, as Purim was disrupted so early in the pandemic, there was no time to plan worship from home. And so Purim this year now becomes the last festival of our cycle to be modified for Zoom. We may sometimes complain about the Zoom, but our kvetching is outweighed by our gratefulness that we are able to connect to our community at all. This last year has forced us to reconsider aspects of all of our Jewish holidays, and some of the changes have proved surprising, improving, expanding, and evolving our bond to the festivals. For this, we make new traditions, filling our hamentaschen with mango, persimmon, or pumpkin, experimenting, exploring the possibilities.

So as Purim marks the passing of one year with the pandemic, we now want to believe that the vaccines and other efforts presage the end of the quarantine. Hopefully among the bad we have found some good, and can bring it with us when we emerge from our homes. But in the meantime, *Chag Purim Sameach!*
a close family member to the conflict. But instead of choosing revenge, they have chosen a path of reconciliation.

These bereaved members, armed with the credibility of their loss and the uncommon path they have chosen, have opened a crack in the psyche of a hardened populace. They have begun to stir an awareness about the conflict that transcends history and politics. For many, it is the first time they have seen “the other side” as human.

The PCFF hopes for the day that political leaders reach an agreement for peace. But they strongly believe that reconciliation between the Israeli and Palestinian people is essential to ensuring that peace is sustainable.

PCFF consists of several programs, including Dialogue Meetings, which are led by two PCFF members, one Israeli and one Palestinian, who tell their personal stories of bereavement and explain their choice to engage in dialogue instead of revenge.

The Tikkun Olam Committee is delighted to virtually host two of these courageous PCFF members, an Israeli and a Palestinian, for a Dialogue Meeting over Zoom in late January or early February.

Please join bereaved Israeli and Palestinian mothers, Robi Damelin and Layla al-Shaikh, who each lost their son to the conflict. Despite having paid the highest price to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, Robi and Layla have chosen a unique path of reconciliation.

The exact date hasn’t been set yet, but because of the time difference between Israel and California, the meeting will be in the morning, probably at 9:00 or 10:00 AM. If you are interested in hearing their stories and joining the conversation, please contact Marci Gerston at marci.gerston@gmail.com or admin@templesanjose.org. We will provide you with the details once determined.
Those who have died recently
Lois Rosett, grandmother of Ilene Tucker

And those we have lost in years past


Thank You for Your Generous Contributions

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Joan Fox, in appreciation of and thank you to Rabbi Dana Magat
Frederick & Sherry Graft, in memory of Helene Graft
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**FEBRUARY 2021**

**1**
- Chat with the Rabbi – 12:00 PM
- Board Meeting – 7:00 PM
- Zoom Intro to Judaism – 7:00 PM

**2**
- Zoom 5781 B’Nai Mitzvah Class – 5:00 PM
- Beit No’ar Wednesdays are EESY – 6:30 PM

**3**
- Ritual Committee Meeting – 6:00 PM

**4**
- Zoom Live Kabbalat Shabbat Service – 7:00 PM

**5**
- Streaming Erev Shabbat Service – 7:00 PM

**6**
- Streaming Erev Shabbat Service – 7:00 PM

**7**
- Beginning Adult Hebrew – 7:00 PM
- Zoom Confirmation Class 5781 – 11:30 AM
- Valentine’s Day<br>Brotherhood Meeting – 9:00 AM
- Religious School – 9:45 AM<br>Sisterhood Meeting – 10:30 AM
- Zoom Confirmation Class 5781 – 11:30 AM
- Great Questions Discussion Group – 12:30 PM

**8**
- Zoom Chat with the Rabbi – 12:00 PM
- Zoom Intro to Judaism – 7:00 PM

**9**
- Zoom Lunch & Learn – 12:00 PM
- Zoom 5781 B’Nai Mitzvah – 5:00 PM

**10**
- Streaming Erev Shabbat Service – 7:00 PM

**11**
- Streaming Erev Purim Trivia Night Experience – 6:00 PM

**12**
- Streaming Erev Shabbat Service – 7:00 PM

**13**
- Zoom Chat with the Rabbi – 12:00 PM
- Zoom Intro to Judaism – 7:00 PM

**14**
- Beginning Adult Hebrew – 7:00 PM
- Valentine’s Day<br>Brotherhood Meeting – 9:00 AM
- Religious School – 9:45 AM<br>Sisterhood Meeting – 10:30 AM
- Zoom Confirmation Class 5781 – 11:30 AM
- Great Questions Discussion Group – 12:30 PM

**15**
- Zoom Chat with the Rabbi – 12:00 PM
- Zoom Intro to Judaism – 7:00 PM

**16**
- Zoom Lunch & Learn – 12:00 PM
- Zoom 5781 B’Nai Mitzvah – 5:00 PM

**17**
- Zoom Live Kabbalat Shabbat Service – 6:30 PM

**18**
- Zoom TV/Film Discussion – 12:00 PM
- Zoom Erev Purim Trivia Night Experience – 6:00 PM

**19**
- Zoom Confirmation Class 5781 – 11:30 AM

**20**
- Zoom Live Kabbalat Shabbat Service – 6:30 PM

**21**
- Virtual Israel Tour – 10:00 AM
- “I Cannot Tell a Lie”<br>ZIGZAG Happy Hour 7:00-8:00 PM

**22**
- Zoom Chat with the Rabbi – 12:00 PM
- Zoom Intro to Judaism – 7:00 PM

**23**
- Zoom Lunch & Learn – 12:00 PM
- Zoom 5781 B’Nai Mitzvah – 5:00 PM
- Beit No’ar Wednesdays are EESY – 6:30 PM

**24**
- Zoom TV/Film Discussion – 12:00 PM
- Zoom Erev Purim Trivia Night Experience – 6:00 PM

**25**
- Zoom Confirmation Class 5781 – 11:30 AM

**26**
- Zoom Live Kabbalat Shabbat Service – 6:30 PM

**27**
- Virtual Israel Tour – 10:00 AM
- “I Cannot Tell a Lie”<br>ZIGZAG Happy Hour 7:00-8:00 PM

**28**
- Religious School – 9:45 AM<br>Purim Shpiel – 10:00 AM<br>Jews of Lithuania with Shirley Lee – 12:00 PM

To celebrate Washington’s birthday, this ZIGZAG happy hour will encourage others to “confess” to funny misdeeds they did as kids or adults (like play hooky from school or forge a parent’s signature on a report card) ... or we could just schmooze.
Amanda Edmondson | Cantor – cantoramanda@templesanjose.org
Jessica Blitchok | Endowment Committee – endowment@templesanjose.org
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Clergy

Making a contribution to one of Temple Emanu-El’s many funds is a wonderful way to honor your friends and family. You may make contributions in honor of a birth, a birthday, brit milah, baby naming, Bar/Bat Mitzvah, confirmation, graduation, engagement, wedding, anniversary, promotion, new home, special occasion or just because. You may also make contributions for get-well wishes, condolences, remembrances and yahrzeits.

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